

Fourteenth Annual Guthrie Scholarship Awards

The scholarship committee is very pleased to announce our six winners of the prestigious Robert Guthrie PKU Scholarship Awards for 2011. While we had a record number of applicants, sadly we had less money than ever before to give away due to fewer donations. A number of outstanding applicants did not receive an award because our funds were so limited. However, we chose six winners who were so exceptionally talented, high achieving, and remarkable that we could not readily distinguish between them. We thus honor each of them equally. They each deserved so much more than the small amount we were able to give them to support their education and hope that more people will contribute to this most worthy cause.

We celebrate and honor the successes of our winners and have confidence that they will each continue to make a significant mark in the world. All of them are keenly aware that their achievements were a possibility only because of the pioneering work of Dr. Guthrie, whose newborn screening test forever changed the fate of individuals affected by PKU.

The awards committee consisted of Dr. Ray Stevens, PhD; Dr. Richard Kronmal, PhD; Cristine Trahms, MS, RD; Barbara Guthrie (one of Dr. Guthrie's adult children); and Virginia Schuett, MS, committee chairperson.

Guthrie Scholarship Winners

Sarah Adams, age 18, Williamston, MI

Shelby Dufton, age 17, Blaine, WA

Jason Bowser, age 17, New Castle, DE

Emma Kinsley, age 17, Kirkwood, MO

Jessica Smith, age 17, Harrodsburg, KY

Felix Löser, age 18, Amberg, Bavaria, Germany

Sarah Adams

Sarah, who plans to major in Engineering at the University of Michigan, Harvard, or Northwestern, says of her PKU: "I have learned that, despite the huge impact my PKU has had on my life, I can still live the way I want to. PKU



has shaped me, including opening my eyes to one of my greatest pleasures: cooking!" She enjoys finding ways to add variety to her diet and is always experimenting with new recipes, and maintains consistently excellent phe levels. She goes on to say, "PKU has taught me that there are so many things that shape who we are, and that they are what we make them . . . I alone have the choice to define my life." Her PKU clinic describes her as a model for dealing with PKU: "She has adapted incredibly well to having PKU, and complied completely with all treatment and follow-up suggestions and instructions."

Described as exceptionally bright, articulate, and creative by those who know her, Sarah has maintained a perfect grade point average of 4.0 throughout high school in difficult advanced placement classes. Sarah is a member of the National Honor Society and scores in the top 5% nationwide on standard achievement tests, giving her the honor of being a National Merit Commended Scholar. Her aptitude for math and science and her love of "building things and understanding the way things work" have led her to explore Engineering as her choice of major in college.

According to a math teacher, "Sarah consistently ranked among the top students in calculus and precalculus. Her work was always thoroughly completed and well organized. Sarah had good rapport with her classmates and other students who were struggling with concepts would feel comfortable asking Sarah for assistance." An English teacher comments, "Sarah's work in my classroom has been outstanding, earning nothing but the highest grades in each trimester of instruction for the past 4 years. Her grades, though, are not just the result of her intelligence alone; they also reflect on the incredible toughness that she possesses. It did not matter what we were studying. Sarah was always consistently engaged in instruction and never shied away from the bigger questions asked of her. Grades were never her sole focus; she always wanted to get the most out of her studies. She has been a shining star at our high school and will surely continue to shine."

Sarah is very active outside the classroom also. She has been an avid soccer player since age 5 and is a starting forward on a community soccer team. She has played soccer at Williamston high school all 4 years, including Varsity team for the past 2 years. Her team has been to the state championship (losing by a single goal) and won many titles, and Sarah

is among the top assist leaders in the area. She also is now an assistance coach for a team of girls under age 11, Williamston Lightning Soccer Team. She is an active member of Business Professionals of America, and placed 2nd in a 2010 event as well as qualifying for state competition two years in a row. She is an active member of her church and participates in numerous volunteer activities through the National Honor Society.

See Sarah's own story on page 15-16.

Shelby Dufton

An idealist by nature who wants to "better the world around me," Shelby also wants to "show children with PKU that, even if you have a disorder that is hard to deal with at times, you can achieve anything that you set your mind to as long as you work for it." She says, "By being different, I have learned not to judge others by their appearance or by a condition they might have. Rather, I look towards their personalities, their actions, and the choices they make. PKU has taught me that we are not defined by our limitations, but instead by what we do to overcome them." Shelby shows in every aspect of her life that she lives by these words. As the "number one" student in her graduating class, she has excelled uniformly in all of her subjects, with a perfect (4.0) grade point average including difficult advanced placement courses. She maintains exceptional blood phe levels (2-4 mg/dl) despite her classic PKU and low phe tolerance.

Shelby plans to attend either Western Washington University or the University of British Columbia majoring in Environmental Sciences. Says Shelby, "Having grown up on the shores of Semiahmoo Bay, I have always been enraptured by the world around me, from the tiny specks of sand that dot the beaches to the vast bodies of water that wrap the world in a cool blue." By pursuing a career in Environmental Sciences she hopes to "work to find solutions to the problems that plague our world today, as well as to show the public how their actions can have a disastrous effect on our planet."

Shelby is a gifted artist and has received many awards for her paintings, drawing, sculpture and other art, and was voted "most inspirational artist" at her school. She has also received many awards for being the best student in her school in a variety of subjects



including US History, Consumer Economics, Environmental Science, Art, and English.

Volunteering for various causes is a passion for Shelby. She has worked through the Vancouver Aquarium's Riverworks program removing invasive species of plants and planting native species in parks, observed and recorded beluga whale behavior at the aquarium, and worked with their Marine Mammal Rescue Program. She has been involved in planning fund raisers for the Blaine Fine Arts Association and has been involved with the Blaine Food Bank and The Giving Tree. She also completed an internship with the Newborn Screening Program at the WA State Department of Health where she helped compile large data sets and analyze trends related to diagnosis and treatment for Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia.

She has participated in the Blaine High School Math Team as well as the Knowledge Bowl Team, through which she has competed throughout the state, making the state final competition last year.

Says a teacher, "Shelby is an exceptional student, but more importantly, she is an exceptional young person. She is someone who will work to make the world that we all share a better place. She has shown an integrity and maturity that should give us all hope for the future." Another teacher echoes those sentiments: "Shelby has a quiet way but easy laugh, a quick wit, and a desire to do well in all things. She is not only a model student, but a model human being. . . I cannot say enough about this impressive young lady. She is a skilled writer, a gifted artist, and a scholar in all academic areas."

Jason Bowser

Jason states, "Despite the challenges of living with PKU, I see some distinct advantages in having it. I have learned to have a certain level of discipline through the diet. I think it has made me more responsible by forcing me to watch what I eat, to take care of myself, and to take on certain duties that most people do not need to do, such as counting my daily intake of phe. Thanks to the help of the caring individuals who have helped me along the way, I have been able to manage this disorder and live what I consider a perfectly normal and happy life." Jason's meticulous attention and dedication to his diet has resulted in exceptional



blood phe control throughout his life.

An outstanding scholar, Jason is in the top 5% of his graduating class at a rigorous private high school. Taking advanced placement and honors courses, Jason is a top student, with a weighted grade point average of 4.2. He has not yet decided on a career path, but has strong interest/talent in English and Literature, Spanish, Psychology and the Arts. He plans to develop his interest in each of these areas at the University of Delaware and see where it takes him.

Jason is involved in many extracurricular activities. He takes an active role in the Student Leadership Group, this year serving as vice-president of the executive board. As part of this group, he has taken on many leadership roles and been involved in a large variety of service activities such as the Dela Care Walk for children in a local hospital. He also is active in the National Honor Society and its many service activities as well as being selected by other students to be a member of the Jefferson Awards committee, which recognizes service contributions of students in the school. Jason was part of the Math League during his freshman year and competed throughout his area. He is on the staff of the school literary magazine, contributing poetry, his own cartoons, and formatting magazine pages. He also tutors elementary students and works with the Marine Corps League to serve veterans at monthly luncheons. Jason has received numerous awards for academic excellence, in Literature, the Word Masters Challenge, Spanish, Religious Studies, and Health. Last year he received a medal for the second highest grade point average.

Says a teacher, "Jason is an outstanding young man, a stellar student, a true scholar and a gentleman, who is also a devoted member of our school literary magazine. His drawing talent and incisive social commentary are evident in his comic strips. Talented, humorous, and highly intelligent, Jason is also one of the most selfless young men I have encountered in my 18 years at this school." Another teacher comments, "Jason is one of the most responsible, mature and caring young men that I have known in my many years of teaching. He is so much more than just an excellent student; he is first and foremost a young man of a most exceptional character. Honor defines all of Jason's behavior; he is generous in helping others, unfailingly polite and considerate, and someone I would trust implicitly in any situation. His leadership skills are outstanding and he is generous with his time and talents.

If something needs to be done, you can always count on Jason."

Emma Kinsley

Emma says, "Despite the challenges that PKU has presented in my life, it has also made me a stronger individual. Since I've had to watch what I eat so closely, I've learned how to be independent and how to take responsibility for my own health and well-being. I don't let the fact that I am different from my friends get in the way of enjoying myself; not obsessing over my diet helps me assimilate in social situations and allows other people to learn and understand my disorder." Emma maintains exemplary blood phe levels (average 4.6 mg/dl over the past 3 years).

Emma's positive attitude about PKU carries over into all other aspects of her life. Music is her special passion. A musician, Emma has been playing violin and viola since she was 4 years old. She is a talented performer, serving as the principal violist for the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra this year (assistant principal for the past 2 years), as well as co-principal for the Kirkwood



High School Symphonic Orchestra (a group that played Carnegie Hall in NY!). She has been a quarterfinalist in the Fischhoff Junior Chamber Competition and received superior ratings at the Missouri ASTA (American String Teachers Association) High School State Solo and Ensemble Contest for 3 years running. She received the 2009 Wendell Irish Viola Award at the National Federation of Music Clubs in 2009. She has played in the Webster University Community Music School Preparatory Program for chamber music, in the ASTA National Honors Orchestra, been a member of the Missouri All State Orchestra for 3 years and the Washington University Opera Orchestra for 3 years, played at the Innsbrook Chamber Institute for 3 years and at the Britt String Quartet Academy as well as attending the Interlochen Arts Camp for Advanced String Quartet.

Emma is in the top 5% of her graduating class, with a 4.14 grade point average, including many advanced placement courses. She plans to major in Anthropology and Music and has already been accepted to the University of Chicago. She enjoys studying cultural interactions and history, and her fascination

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Guthrie Merit Award winners, from page 5 with ancient Egypt from the time she was a child led to her desire for a career as a field archeologist after doing graduate work in archeology. This past summer, she was part of an anthropology and archeology camp that allowed her to travel to Peru and to go on an archeological dig in North Carolina, cementing her interest in the field.

Praise for Emma is profuse. The director of the pre-college music program at Webster University, an elite group of students who plan to pursue music in college and beyond, states: "Emma is a very accomplished violist, presently serving as Principal Viola in the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. She has the added advantage of being an outstanding academician. She is poised and mature, responsible and capable, manages her schedule and affairs very well, gets along with everyone, and responds quickly to instruction. She is easygoing, delightful to work with, appreciative of and responsive to instruction, and respectful towards parents, peers, and teachers. She is highly supportive of her fellow students, and interested in everything." Another teacher says, "Emma is a rock star as a student, performer, and person. She is a kind and compassionate person who has overcome much in her personal life to make her into a truly remarkable individual who will surely leave her distinguished mark on the world. It is truly amazing to see such a strong person who must battle every day to make wise and self-sacrificing decisions concerning their health succeed and be so exceptional. Emma may battle, but she always wins!"

Jessica Smith

Jessica says, "Achieving my goals has always motivated me to work through situations and stay on diet. Just as I don't let PKU prevent me from achieving my goals, I refuse to let any other obstacle stand in my way. Long ago I accepted PKU as a part of me. PKU has made me who I am, and I would not have it any other way. If anything, I'm grateful to have PKU because it has helped make me the strong woman I am today." Jessica maintains excellent phe levels (1-6 mg/dl).

Jessica's family moved to Kobe, Japan three years ago for her father's work in engineering, and will be moving back to the US when Jessica starts college. She has a passion for physics-related studies and intends to study



Engineering at the University of Kentucky. She finds satisfaction in pursuing the most challenging curriculum available. In high school she is completing the rigorous International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma in Japan where her school, Canadian Academy, represents nearly 30 different nations (only 25% from North America). She excels in all subjects while also pursuing her interest in sports. She was a competitive swimmer until moving to Japan, but now plays three sports at Varsity level: volleyball, basketball, and soccer. She also is an active member of Young Life (a Christian youth organization) where she is a student leader. She has travelled to the Philippines and Cambodia serving at orphanages in those countries, as well as serving homeless in Japan. She also is a member of an acclaimed a'capella choral group that performs at the school and around the community, as well having participated for two years in an international Choral Festival. Jessica hopes to work in research and development, or a job that allows her to apply physics directly to solving problems.

A teacher says, "Jessie is everything I could hope to see in a student as well as in a young woman. She possesses diligence, adaptability, a mature attitude, and a warm, friendly personality. She is strong mathematically and conceptually and is able to grasp ideas faster than most students. She serves as a hugely positive role model for her peers. She is at once mature, engaging, and personable, and uses those attributes effectively in encouraging those around her to be better people as well." Another says, "Without a doubt, Jessie is one of the most well-rounded, organized, and hard-working students I have had the pleasure of teaching. Her ability to keep herself driving forward and succeeding at the level she does is nothing short of extraordinary."

Felix Löser

Felix, who lives in Amberg, a small town in Bavaria, Germany, says "In each of my life's situations PKU plays its part. It influences me in ways people without PKU can't even dream of. But though it influences me, I am definitely not going to let it be the biggest part of my life. Yes, there are problems to overcome but I've learned from them and I don't get overwhelmed by them. Even with the strict diet, I have made my own way. I was, yes, I would even say gifted with PKU, because without it I wouldn't be who I am."

His rocky start to education when he was early grade school age and refused to do



homework despite his interest in the subjects was replaced with extraordinary success after he was changed to a private school. For five of the six following years, he finished best in his class. For his

secondary school diploma in 2009, he scored first in the Math and Science branch. Last year, he enrolled in a Technical High School for Applied Sciences, where he will get his diploma, enabling him to attend a university of applied sciences. He chose the Technology branch of the school because he has always had a great interest in physics, chemistry, and the way things work and interact. He hopes to study Applied Chemistry starting in fall 2011 in Munich or Nuremberg. He also has interest in Biomedical Engineering and applied Physics in Regensburg or Munich, so time will tell what his future holds. He plans to get an advanced degree, and to spend at least one term abroad as an undergraduate and perhaps more as a graduate student.

Felix loves doing volunteer work via a Catholic youth organization where he has been a member since age 7 and where he has worked for 3 years. Through this program he works with children of all ages. He also is involved in planning and working for the annual summer camp for ages 6 to 14. He has spent a month with a PKU family in Canada and has gone to several PKU summer camps which have helped him become independent in dealing with his diet on a daily basis.

A teacher comments, "Felix is a friendly, helpful, and diversely talented student. He always dove into the lessons with constructive comments and handled the tasks given with great reliability. His exemplary behavior needs special recognition." Another states, "His great thirst for knowledge is amazing and his school work ability is one of the best in his grade. His behavior is always laudable and it is a great pleasure to teach him. One of his greatest strengths is his quick understanding of complex ideas not only in natural sciences but also in foreign languages. This distinguishes him from most of his classmates. He is very eager to bring up his own ideas and critically question not only what is being taught, but also his own ideas. His strong interest in all subjects made him a pleasure to teach and the top student in his class. He also was among the ten best graduates in the school."